



November 30, 2017

Governor Charles Baker
Massachusetts State House
Office of the Governor, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker,

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is currently searching for new sources of energy. As members of the Massachusetts tribal community, we are concerned about how those sources, specifically large-scale Canadian hydropower, stand to affect native communities beyond our borders.

The Pessamit Innu First Nation is an aboriginal tribe that has occupied 53,400 square miles of territory in northern Quebec for over 8,000 years.

The Pessamit have suffered greatly at the hands of Hydro-Quebec, a provincially owned Canadian utility. Hydro-Quebec has constructed numerous large-scale hydroelectric power developments on traditional Pessamit territories that have caused serious destruction to the natural landscape and damage to the Pessamit Innu way of life. Hydro-Quebec is now aiming to deliver its hydroelectric power to our region and has submitted numerous proposals to Massachusetts' "clean energy" solicitation.

The Pessamit Innu recently came to Massachusetts to describe the history of abuse and neglect they have suffered at the hands of Hydro-Quebec. The delegation explained how the creation of massive reservoirs and dams for hydroelectric generation has devastated the rivers the Pessamit depend on for hunting, fishing, and transportation. Wildly fluctuating water levels have induced severe erosion along river banks while flooding has forced the Pessamit from their native territory. The annual salmon yield – a staple of the Pessamit diet – has dipped from nearly 1,200 a year in the mid-twentieth century to virtually nothing today. This is due to the constant changing of the river's water level by dam operators, which can fluctuate up to seven times per day.

These numerous hydropower developments, 13 power stations and 11 reservoirs in total, were undertaken without impact assessment studies or Pessamit consent, violating the Canadian Constitution and the Pessamit's fundamental rights. The culture and livelihood of the Pessamit Innu have suffered dramatically as a result.

Massachusetts stands to compound the plight of the Pessamit Innu by importing this hydropower from Canada. The Northern Pass project and others like it are proposing to bring this power to our region. It is critical that Massachusetts officials realize the effects of such proposals on indigenous communities. We

urge you to reject the Northern Pass application to the state's clean energy RFP as well as other projects associated with Hydro Quebec that could cause further harm to the Pessamit Innu. Doing so will make us complicit in these injustices and accelerate the destruction of Pessamit homelands.

Pessamit Innu Chief Rene Simon has recently written an op-ed detailing these issues in greater depth, which we have also included here. For the Pessamit's presentation to those in Massachusetts, visit www.pessamitsgreenenergy.com.

There are better, less harmful ways to bring "clean energy" to Massachusetts. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.



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Attorney General Maura Healey, Energy and Environment Bureau
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Speaker Robert A. DeLeo, Massachusetts House of Representatives
Senator Stanley C. Rosenberg, Massachusetts Senate
Senator Harriette L. Chandler, Massachusetts Senate